

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07  
NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 AID-05 EB-08  
IO-13 SCSE-00 SCA-01 OES-06 H-02 /079 W  
-----101236Z 017567 /13

R 101240Z APR 77  
FM AMCONSUL ISFAHAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0081  
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMCONSUL SHIRAZ POUCH

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 ISFAHAN 0029

E.O.11652: N/A  
TAGS: SWEL, IR  
SUBJ: DISASTER REPORT - EARTHQUAKE NEAR ISFAHAN

REF: TEHRAN 3013

1. SUMMARY. CONOFFS VISITED EARTHQUAKE RELIEF COMMAND POST, CAPITAL OF CHAHAR MAHAL BAKHTIARI PROVINCE, AND ONE OF STRICKEN VILLAGES, FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 1977. NEITHER PROVINCE CAPITAL NOR TOWN WHERE COMMAND POST LOCATED SHOWED ANY SIGH OF QUAKE. COMMAND POST APPEARED WELL-ORGANIZED AND WELL SUPPLIED WITH TRANSPORTATION AND FACILITIES, AS WELL AS WITH RELIEF SUPPLIES, BUT STRICKEN VILLAGES ARE TOTALLY CUT OFF BY LAND DUE FLOODING AND COLLAPSED BRIDGES, AND CLOUDY WEATHER HAS SEVERELY HAMPERED AIR ACCESS TO SOME AREAS. VILLAGE OF NAQAN, PROBABLY SECOND MOST SEVERELY HIT, HAS AT LEAST 200 DEAD AND TOTAL MAY REACH 600. END SUMMARY.

2. CONOFFS DROVE APRIL 8 TO BOROUJEN WHERE RED LION AND SUN SOCIETY (RLSS), IRANIAN EQUIVALENT OF RED CROSS HAS ESTABLISHED EARTHQUAKE COMMAND POSTS ON OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN. POST IS UNDER OPERATION COMMAND OF JALAL JAHAN-MIR, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF RLSS FOR CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AREAS OF IRAN (AND UNCLASSIFIED

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MINISTRY COURT CONTACT MAN IN SHIRAZ). POST CONSISTS OF OPEN FIELD LEVELED BY GRADER APRIL 7 WITH FOUR ASPHALT HELIPADS, ALSO LAID APRIL 7, MOBILE HELP STATION AND ROOMS IN ADJACENT GENDARMERIE HEADQUARTERS PROVIDED COVER. RELIEF SUPPLIES, INCLUDING TENTS, BLANKETS, MEDICAL SUPPLIES, FOOD, STOVES AND HEATERS, TINNED KEROSENE, AND WINDING SHEETS FOR CORPSES ARE PILED ON FIELD UNDER GUARD. RLSS AND MILITARY

TRUCKS SHELTER MORE SUPPLIES AND RLSS AMBULANCES WAIT TO TRANSPORT WOUNDED TO BOROUJEN SMALL RLSS HOSPITAL OR TO ISFAHAN. IMPERIAL IRAN ARMY AIR WING (IIAA) HAS DETAILED HELICOPTERS AND MOST EXPERIENCED PILOTS TO RELIEF EFFORT. CONOFF SAW THREE CHINOOK AND FOUR HUEY VARIANTS AND PROBABLY OTHERS WERE OFF ON MISSIONS.

3. COMMAND POST HAS RECEIVED VISITS FROM BAKHTIARI PROVINCE GOVERNOR GENERAL, RLSS NATIONAL DIRECTOR, AND COMMANDER OF ISFAHAN MILITARY DISTRICT. QUEEN MOTHER IS EXPECTED NEXT FEW DAYS.

4. JAHAN-MIR TOLD CONSUL, RELIEF PREPARATIONS SHAPED UP RAPIDLY APRIL 7, BUT TORRENTIAL RAIN AND HEAVY CLOUDS PREVENTED ANY AIR OPERATION THAT DAY. OVERLAND ATTEMPTS TO

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TO REACH STRICKEN VILLAGES IN EXTREMELY ISOLATED VALLEYS ALONG FAR (WESTERN) SIDE OF ZAGROS RANGE'S CENTRAL MASSIF WERE ALSO ABORTIVE DUE FLOODING AND COLLAPSED BRIDGES.

5. JAHAN-MIR INVITED CONOFFS ACCOMPANY HIM ON FIRST ATTEMPTS BY CHINOOK TO REACH ARDAL AND NAQAN, TWO MOST SEVERELY DAMAGED VILLAGES. FROM BOROUJEN, HELICOPTER SKIRTED STILL-SNOW-COVERED ZAGROS CENTRAL MASSIF, WEAVING THROUGH NARROW, BARREN VALLEYS AND DODGING LARGE PATCHES OF CLOUDS FOR 40 MINUTES. OVER ARDAL CLOUDS COMPLETELY OBSCURED VILLAGE AND PILOT COULDN'T LAND. AFTER RETURNING BOROUJEN AND CHANGING COPTERS, SIMILAR BUT LESS EXCITING FLIGHT TO NAQAN WAS SUCCESSFUL DUE LIGHTER CLOUD COVER WHICH PERMITTED LANDING.

VILLAGE OF 4,000 PERCHED ON SLOPING MEADOWS AND FOOT HILLS, BUT HIGH RIDGE AND APRALLEL PLUNGING VALLEYS SHOWED ONLY MINOR DAMAGE IN SLOPE AREA BUT ALL CONSTRUCTION BUILT UP ON THE SIDE OF LINE OF FOOT HILLS HAD COLLAPSED AND MUCH RUBBLE HAD SLID TO BOTTOM OF HILL, BURYING LOWERLEVELS TO CONSIDERABLE DEPTH. VILLAGERS HAD NOT MANAGED TO DIG OUT MANY CASUALTIES NOR HAD THEY TAKEN CENSUS TO DETERMINE EXACTLY WHO AND HOW MANY WERE MISSING, A TASK COMPLICATED BY FACT THAT FEW PEOPLE IN SUCH REMOTE AREAS ARE OFFICIALLY REGISTERED. FAMILY HEADS SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE ABLE REPORT ON FAMILY

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MEMBERS.

6. IN DISCUSSING CASUALTIES, VILLAGERS DESCRIBED WEDDING CELEBRATION WITH 60 GUESTS, ALL OF WHOM WERE BURIED BY QUAKE. OFFICIALLY, DEATH ESTIMATES FOR NAQAN ARE ABOUT 200, BUT ISFAHAN POLICE CAPTAIN, WHO FLEW TO VILLAGE TO CHECK ON FAMILY DEATHS IN VILLAGE, ESTIMATED 600 DEATHS BASED ON TALKS WITH RELATIVES AND NEIGHBORS. TWO WOMEN, PRESUMEABLY AMONG MOST SEVERELY WOUNDED, EVACUATED ON RETURN TRIP TO BOROUJEN, BOTH HAD LOST LEFT HAND, SEVERED ABOUT WRIST BY FALLING DEBRI, AND BOTH HAD RECEIVED GOOD FIRST AID CARE FROM REGIONAL MEDIC BUT NEEDED FURTHER TREATMENT.

7. COMMENT: GOI PRE-PLANNING AND RELIEF SUPPLY STOCKPILING. MUST BE EXCELLENT TO PERMIT SUCH RAPID REACTION TO DISASTER. OPERATION UNDER JAHAN-MIR APPEARS EFFECTIVE, PROBABLY BENEFITTING FROM HIS RECENT EXPERIENCE IN ORGANIZING BANDAR ABBAS QUAKE RELEF AND OTHER SIMILAR OPERATIONS. FACTORS SLOWING GOI RESPONSE ARE EXTREME REMOTENESS OF AREA AND POOR WEATHER. VILLAGERS APPEAR IN SHOCK AND ABLE DO LITTLE TO HELP THEMSELVES OR ASSIST AUTHORITIES' EFFORTS. END COMMENT.

MARSHALL

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## Message Attributes

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